

REMARKS

Claims 1-10 are pending in the above-identified application. Claim 1 has been amended based on the disclosure of the examples in the present specification as discussed in more detail immediately below. It is requested that the cancellation of claim 12 and the amendment to claim 1 be entered of record under 37 C.F.R. 1.116 since these changes place the claims of the present application into better form for consideration on appeal. These changes do not introduce any significant new issues, but rather reduce or eliminate the issues previously considered during prosecution of the present application.

Support for Change to Claim 1

Claim 1 has been amended so as to recite that the percentage of dimples having a particular contour length is greater than or equal to 77%. Support for this change is found in various examples in the present specification, such as Example 5 in Table 7 at page 24 of the specification. It is submitted that the original disclosure of the present application fully supports this feature recited in amended claim 1.

Issues Under 35 U.S.C. 103(a)

Claims 1-10 and 12 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Satoshi '958 (JP 10-248958) in view of Oka '567 (USP 4,729,567). Claim 12 has been cancelled. This rejection is traversed for the following reasons.

Present Invention and Its Advantages

The present invention is directed to a golf ball having as one significant feature a minimum percentage of dimples with a contour length of 11.6 mm or more, wherein this minimum percentage is 77% as recited in claim 1. The golf balls of the present invention exhibit advantageously improved flight performance and shot feel properties as shown in Tables 7 and 8 on pages 24-25 of the specification. Note, for example, that Example 5 (77% dimples with appropriate contour length) exhibits advantageously improved flight distance (or "carry") properties over Example 11 (50%) and Example 2 (63%). A summary of the comparative test data taken from Table 7 is shown below.

		Example 11	Example 2	Example 5
USGA-IV (ft/s)		255.2	255.2	255.2
Percentage of dimples having a longer contour length (%)		50	63	77
Condition A	Carry (yards)	165	167	168
	Total (yards)	183	185	187
Condition B	Carry (yards)	196	198	199
	Total (yards)	217	219	221
Condition C	Carry (yards)	225	227	229
	Total (yards)	237	241	244

Distinctions between Present Invention and Satoshi '958

Satoshi '958 is mentioned at page 1 of the present specification. Satoshi '958 includes a "computer translation" into English which describes various materials for the core and cover of various golf balls. Satoshi '958 discloses in [0016]-[0017] a core which exhibits a compression in the range of 2.5-4.5 mm by applying an initial load of 10 kg up to 130 kg. The computer translation of Satoshi '958 does not include specific information regarding the dimple diameter or contour lengths of the dimples. It appears that all the examples of Satoshi '958 are golf balls having a diameter of 42.7 mm.

Satoshi '958 fails to disclose or suggest the golf ball of the present invention which includes the feature of having at least 77% of the dimples with an appropriate contour length. Thus, Satoshi

'958 fails to recognize the advantages achieved by the present invention which employs appropriate contour length dimples in an amount of at least 77% in order to achieve unexpectedly advantageously improved flight distance properties as discussed above. Therefore, significant patentable distinctions exist between the present invention and Satoshi '958. In addition, even if it were hypothetically assumed that Satoshi '958 presents evidence of prima facie obviousness, such evidence has been rebutted by the comparative tests results disclosed in the present specification and discussed above.

Distinctions Between Present Invention and Oka '567

Oka '567 is a newly cited reference. The Patent Examiner points out in the Office Action that Oka '567 discloses in Table 2 at columns 7-8 Embodiments 6 and 7 which include dimples having diameters sufficiently large enough so as to satisfy the "contour length" feature recited in the present claims.

Oka '567 fails to disclose or suggest the golf ball of the present invention which includes the feature of having at least 77% of the dimples with an appropriate contour length. Oka '567 does not address issues with regard to the compressive deformation properties or hardness properties of the golf ball and cover thereof as recited in the claims of the present application. Thus,

Oka '567 fails to recognize the advantages achieved by the present invention which employs appropriate contour length dimples in an amount of at least 77% in order to achieve unexpectedly advantageously improved flight distance properties as discussed above. Therefore, significant patentable distinctions exist between the present invention and Oka '567. In addition, even if it were hypothetically assumed that Oka '567 presents evidence of prima facie obviousness, such evidence has been rebutted by the comparative tests results disclosed in the present specification and discussed above.

In addition to the above, it is further submitted that even if Oka '567 and Satoshi '958 are hypothetically combined together, the resulting hypothetical combined disclosure would still fail to disclose or suggest a golf ball having at least 77% of the dimples with an appropriate contour length as in the present invention.

Conclusion

It is submitted for the reasons stated above that the present claims define patentable subject matter such that this application should now be placed condition for allowance.

If any questions arise regarding the above matters, please contact Applicant's representative, Andrew D. Meikle (Reg. No.

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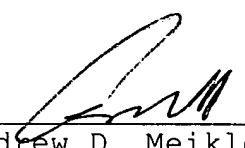
32,868), in the Washington Metropolitan Area at the phone number listed below.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

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